

Consumers want to read about Family and Relations but the publishers write about Sports.

**READER INDEX 2017: A REPORT ON THE GAP
BETWEEN PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION
OF ARTICLES IN EUROPEAN MEDIA.**

Too many articles about sports and too few about family and relations. But this might be fixed by a change in how publishers write. These are some of the conclusions from a new Reader Index that the media tech company Strossle has created.

BACKGROUND

Strossle has analyzed 924,511 published articles from European media outlets during 2017 to observe potential discrepancy between subjects that media outlets choose to cover and subjects that readers choose to digest.

The study is based on data from Strossle's technology platform, today used by approximately 1,500 publishers in 11 European countries. The scope of the material is what makes the study unique. Analyzed articles were published between March and September 2017.

METHOD

When a publisher uses Strossle, the platform analyzes all articles semantically and then sorts them into various subject categories, for example news, entertainment, and sports. By comparing the share of articles written about a certain subject with the share of page views in this subject, it is possible to conclude if a subject is "over-produced", "under-produced", or if it is balanced.

In other words, we can conclude that there are subjects that are read more than they are written about (under-produced) and there are subjects that media outlets cover more than reader demand requires (over-produced).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is in part to create a foundation for a larger discussion regarding priorities among publishers, and in part to create a report that can be used by individual media companies when they make editorial decisions.

WHAT ARE PUBLISHERS WRITING ABOUT AND WHAT ARE EUROPEANS READING?

Before looking at the over-represented and under-represented subjects, it is relevant to present the top list for the most publicized and read subjects in absolute values:

TOP 5 - PUBLICIZED AND READ SUBJECTS

PUBLICIZED SUBJECTS

The five most publicized subjects among european publishers (in descending order):

1. SPORTS
2. NEWS
3. SOCIETY
4. LAW, GOVERNMENT & POLITICS
5. ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

READ SUBJECTS

The five most read subjects among european consumers (in descending order):

1. NEWS
2. FAMILY & PARENTING
3. SOCIETY
4. ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
5. SPORTS

The individual lists above cannot answer if the amount of produced articles in their respective fields is reasonable. A subject which is covered intensely could still be under-produced if the share of readers is even higher, or over-produced if the share of production exceeds the share of readers.

EXAMPLE:

Sports constitutes approximately 6.9 % of all read articles. However, the same subject represents approximately 15.4 % of all published articles. By dividing 15.4 with 6.9, we get a quota of 2.2, which in the case of our study means that the subject is over-produced.

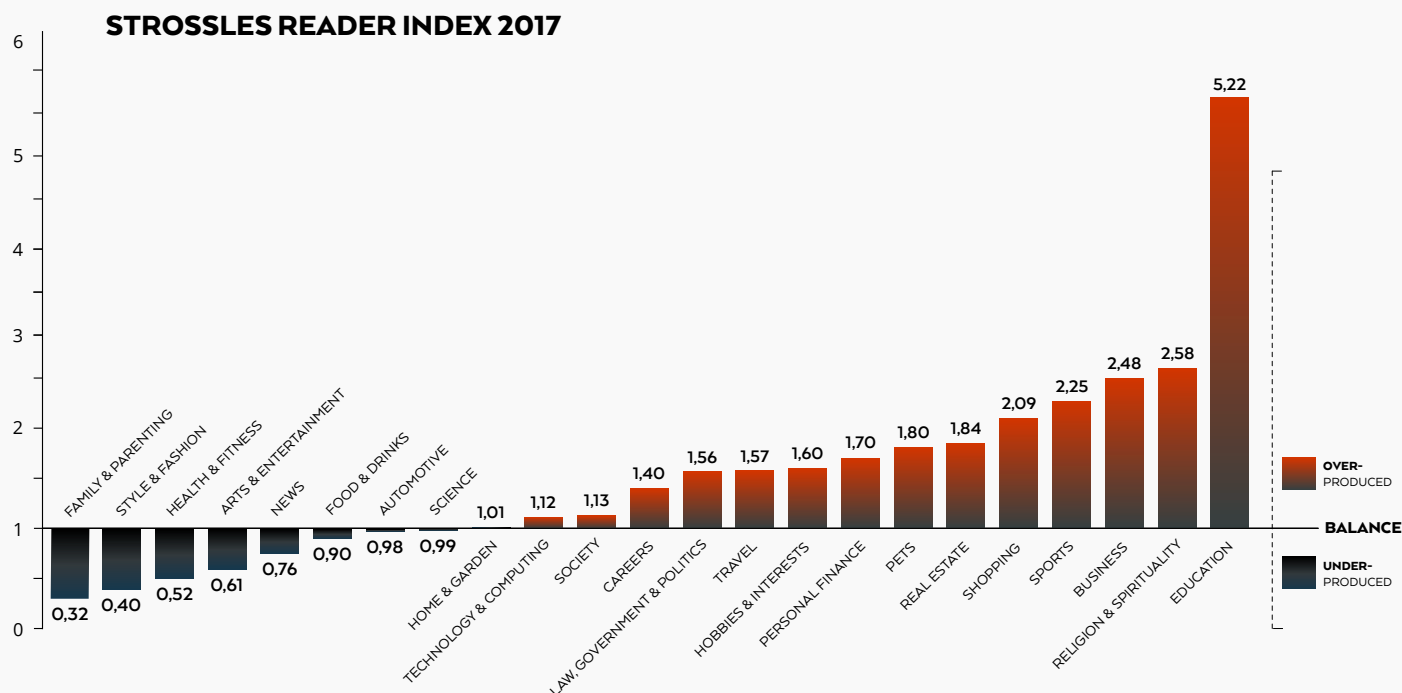
Using this method we've split all subjects into three different groups

Quota > 1 = Over-produced

Quota 1 = Balanced

Quota <1 = Under-produced

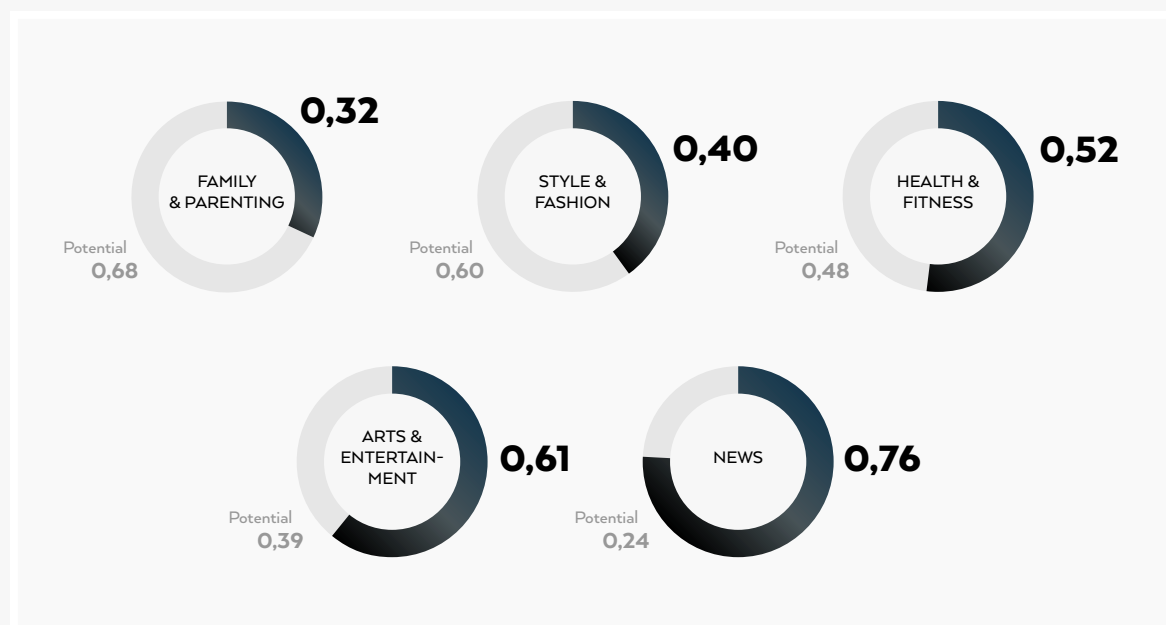
By placing the production share and the reader share relative to each other, we can observe if articles published on websites belonging to European publications relate to what consumers want to read about when visiting these sites. We have categorized our material in 23 subjects as determined by IAB (Interactive Advertising Bureau), an international trade association for stakeholders in digital market communications. Based on these quotas we have created a "reader index".



The above diagram shows all 23 categories. Subjects under the x-axis are under-produced (readers want more) and subjects over the x-axis are over-produced (too much is written). The closer a stack is to the x-axis, the better the balance between production and reading.

UNDER-PRODUCED SUBJECTS

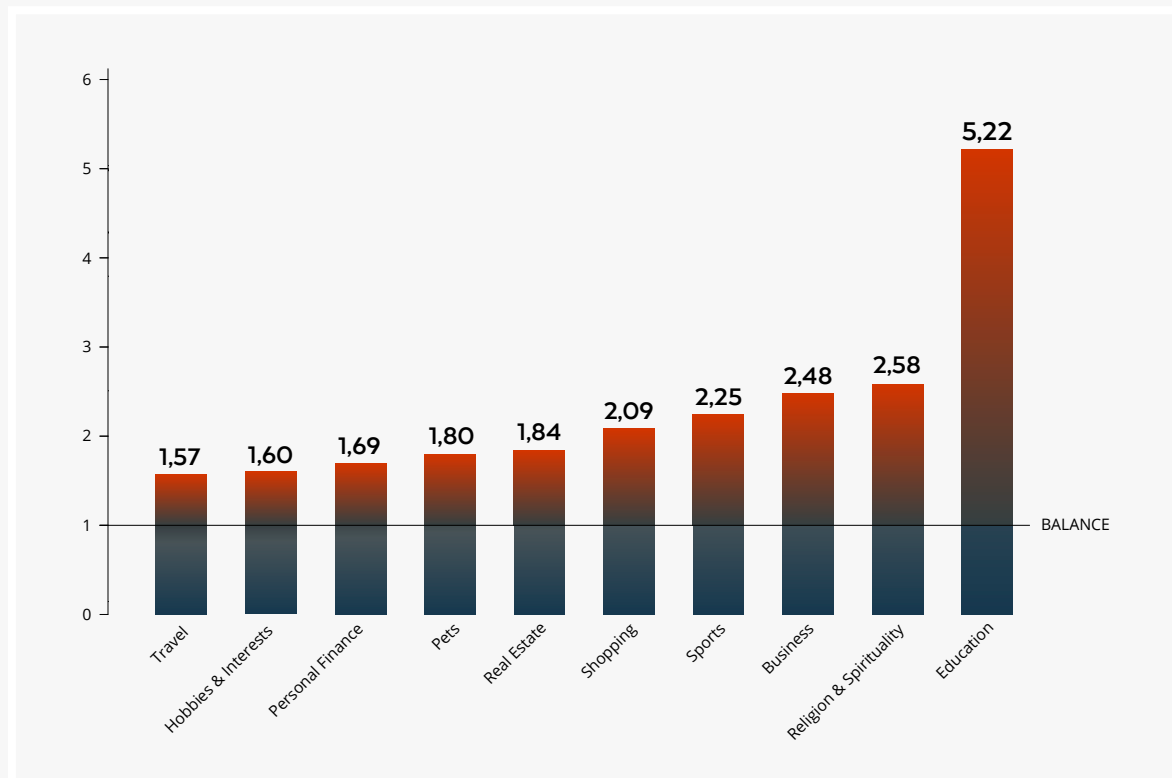
Below, we have listed the five most under-produced subject categories. By placing the production share relative to the reader share, we can observe the share of reading that can be explained by the amount of articles. "Potential" shows how far the subject category is from being balanced. For example, in Health & Fitness, there is potential for about twice the amount of articles that are currently publicized according to reader interest.



In this study, we haven't analyzed why these subjects are under-produced. However, we can say that among the under-produced subjects we have found several subjects that historically aren't the most prestigious areas to cover.

OVER-PRODUCED SUBJECTS

Subject categories in this group have a production share that is much greater than the reader share. Below are the ten subjects where this difference is the greatest.



Education is the most over-produced subject in our study, having a quota of 5.2 (production share is 5.2 times greater than reader share). However, education is not an area that is covered a whole lot in absolute values. That is why it is more interesting to study the category Sports, as it is the most publicized area. Thus, an over-production of sports news has greater actual effects.

IS TOO MUCH WRITTEN OR IS IT WRITTEN IN THE WRONG WAY?

Does this mean that too much is written about the over-produced categories? Maybe, but it might also mean that the written articles are targeting a very specific group of people. Sports journalism has traditionally targeted men, and it is only in recent years that for example women's football has started getting coverage.

The same reasoning could possibly also be applied to other overproduced categories. By mainly writing articles for a certain gender, a social class, or a demographic, many potential readers are instantly lost.

SUBJECTS WITH THE BEST BALANCE



Above are the five subjects with the best balance in terms of reader share and production share. It can be concluded that websites for European publications write about these subjects to a reasonable extent relative to reader interest.

CONCLUSIONS

- The five most over-produced subjects are Education, Religion & Spirituality, Business, Sports, and Shopping.
- The five most under-produced subjects are Family & Parenting, Style & Fashion, Health & Fitness, Arts & Entertainment, and News.
- Over-production and under-production could be explained by some subjects being more prestigious than others.
- Over-production and under-production doesn't necessarily mean that more or less should be written about a subject. Instead, adjustments may be needed when framing the subject, and when creating the target audience.

ABOUT STROSSLE

Strossle is a media tech company that helps publishers and advertisers to increase the consumption and monetization of digital content. At the core is a platform, developed by Strossle, that uses algorithms and data to recommend the right content and ads to the right users. The vision is to give all publishers access to the same reach and data as the social platforms have, and contribute to a healthier media landscape.

Strossle's revenues are primarily generated from sponsored content. The company, founded in 2013, cooperates with 1500 sites and 500 advertisers across Europe.



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